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## BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTES.

### CHARLES KIRKLAND WHEELER'S CRITIQUE OF PURE KANT.

This volume of easy, lively reading, whether one agree with the views therein expressed or not, is a bomb of New England manufacture thrown at Kant's conceptions and categories and doubly interesting from the fact that it comes from the pen of a man once devoted to medical science and the humanities.

Whatever exception may be taken from a certain turn of phraseology—and which we wish had not been adopted—the work suggests throughout a mind so vivid in its own realizations, so generously human, so assured of its own conceptions of truth that it can only converse to the reader and hold unswervingly its own unflickering lamp to the public view. There is a sterling honesty in the refuter which, whether we agree with the refutations or not, whether we are hostile or again prefer to take a more agnostic stand away from both philosophers, it must be granted places Dr. Wheeler in the rank of worthy combatants. He is so exquisitely sure that *he is* that a young student might well be conceived of as winning to a buoyant reassurance of his own individuality, his precious ego that he begrudged to yield up to the man who wants to float us promiscuously on an ill-defined, suspiciously unsure—in every direction—ocean of intermingled nonentity. A philosophy, even if expressed chiefly in refutation, is welcome when it leaves us neighbors, not intermingled fluid doubtfulness. This Dr. Wheeler's does. Minds, all in their own orbit of power, are. Things, be their origin what it may, are. Nor, with him, do we bump against obstinate rocks because we had fondly etherealized and renounced them in an absolute transcendentalism.

There is no carking egotism in the volume: rather, the spirit of a man in revolt against ought that savors of miserliness or the very least rejection of human rights. Essentially the writer proves his dwelling-place the humanities, however much he be occupied with Pure Reason.

"The very keystone to the whole arch of the Kantian metaphysics is that we *perceive and know nothing* of that of which it is the *blazing pronouncement of the primary consciousness that we do perceive and know something*."

This is a pivoted phrase. Dr. Wheeler craves the deity in the ego. To be sure of a basis for Reason, to *know* some cause and effect in pure exemplification, to be able to believe and therefore win strength, this is the start and the goal.

What is God without knowledge and surety?

One must sense that Dr. Wheeler feared that the student caught in Kant's pure transcendentalism is likely to stray far from the humanities—so warmly embraced by the Gallic outlook—and that, at a day when in greatest degree the student can ill afford to be oblivious of them, the world is in danger of a complete slump from disregard of ethical connections which make for human progress.

We should realize the menace.

F. E. DUNCAN.

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

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#### THE PUBLICATION OF "ISIS."

[Reprinted from *Science*, N. S., Vol. XLIX, No. 1259, pp. 170-171, February 14, 1919.]

*To the Editor of Science:* The publication of *Isis*, an international quarterly devoted to the history and philosophy of science, was brutally interrupted in 1914 by the German invasion of Belgium. As I have no direct way of reaching all those who at that time had subscribed to Volumes II and III, I would be grateful to you if you would kindly insert this account of the future projects of the journal.

The sixth part of *Isis* was in the press in Brussels when war broke out. It will appear as soon as circumstances permit, but I fear this will not be until next autumn. The publication of Volume III, however, will take place soon after, perhaps in 1919, but at the latest in the early part of 1920. The undertaking in its original form met with encouraging support from many quarters; I may be permitted to mention for example that it is for my work in connection with it that the Prix Binoux was awarded to me by the Académie des Sciences of Paris in December, 1915. Yet after four years of work and thought the weaknesses of *Isis* are very obvious to me and I shall endeavor to correct them. Of course, the latter part of Volume II, as well as Volume III, which had already been prepared for publication in 1914, will not greatly differ from Volume I. But from Volume IV onward considerable changes will be made. It is my ambition to make *Isis* the main center of information in all matters pertaining to the history and philosophy of science, and the international organ of New Humanism.

Some of the features which I propose to introduce are as follows:

Instead of publishing in four languages, an effort will be made to use only French and English—chiefly, and perhaps exclusively, the latter. Articles written in other languages will be translated into English. More illustrations will be added and will consist mainly of portraits, facsimiles of manuscripts and of rare books. The bibliographical section will contain a larger number of short critical notes. Moreover, from Volume III or IV onward I hope to share the editorial responsibilities with other scientists, chiefly with Dr. Charles Singer of Exeter College, Oxford, who is known as a historian of medicine and a medieval scholar.

The new *Isis* will only publish shorter articles. The longer and more monographic ones would be included in Singer's *Studies in the History and Method of Science*. The first volume of this work was issued by the Oxford